

## 58th Anniversary Dinner in NY — A call to fight the GOP's 'Contract'

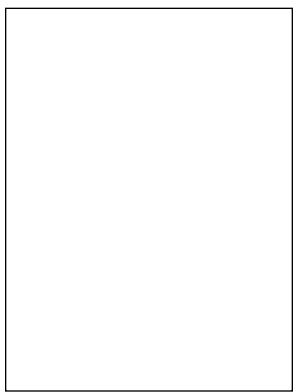
Tradition, inseparable from the politics of current history, marked the VALB 58th anniversary dinner held April 30 at the Sheraton-New York Hotel. Co-sponsored by the Abraham Lincoln Brigade Archives, the event was an inspiring occasion for its six hundred guests, among whom were 48 Lincoln veterans.

Tony Randall, truly a multi-

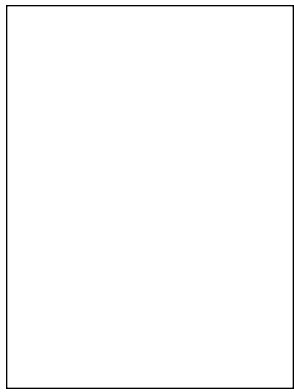
media star, who had insisted on being designated chairperson rather than a speechmaker, began the post-meal program with a crescendo of one-liners blistering the Republican attack on the arts and civil liberties.

Cary Nelson, Jubilee Professor of English at the University of Illinois and ALBA co-chair, then described the 600-plus page collection of Lincoln Brigaders' wartime letters from Spain that he and Jeff Hendricks have edited for publication early next year under the title *Madrid: 1937: Letters from the Abraham Lincoln brigade in the Spanish Civil War*. When he read several letters by Lincolns who had died in Spain, a reverent silence settled over the audience. Appropriately, Professor Nelson was followed by a roll call of the Lincoln veterans in attendance (one-fourth of the VALB survivors' roster). They stood to a tribute from the guests.

Mimi Turque, a principal actor in the current Broadway production of *Kiss of the Spider Woman*, movingly read poems by Edwin Rolfe and Genevieve Taggard. She was followed by the presentation of a plaque to Abe Smorodin for his



Tony Randall



Rep. Jerrold Nadler

important years of service on the VALB staff.

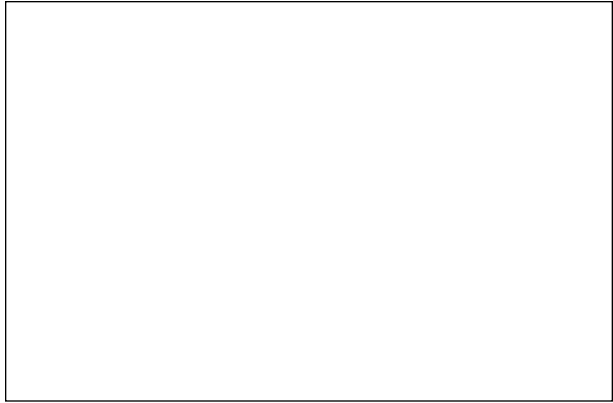
The inevitable effective fund appeal was made by Henry Foner, retired president of the Fur and Leather Workers Union. (When tabulated the next day, it totalled over \$9,000.)

As the final speaker, Tony Randall welcomed Jerrold L. (Jerry)

*Continued on page 20*

**Roster of Lincoln Vets  
at the East Coast Dinner  
April 30, 1995**

Ernest Amatniek, Al Amery,  
 Moe Bailin, Jack Bjoze,  
 Louis Bortz, Joe Brandt,  
 Morris Brier, George Cullinen,  
 Jacob Epstein, Ruth Epstein,  
 Ralph Fassinella, Harry Fisher,  
 Moe Fishman, Saul Friedberg,  
 Ben Goldring, Sam Gonshak,  
 Lou Gordon, Ken Graeber,  
 Clarence Kailin, Al Koslow,  
 Manny Lanser, Len Levenson,  
 Joe Luftig, Matti Mattson,  
 Arthur Munday, Blas Padrino,  
 John Perrone, Bob Reed,  
 Herman Rosenstein, Sam Schiff,  
 Jack Shafron, Jack Shulman,  
 John Simon, Dave Smith,  
 Abe Smorodin, Leo Solodkin,  
 George Sossenkeno, Sam Spiller,  
 John Stockwell, Bill Susman,  
 Hy Tabb, Anthony Toney,  
 Bill Van Felix, Harry Wallach,  
 Jesse Wallach, Sam Walters,  
 Al Warren, Bill Wheeler



Abe Smorodin with his award for years of service on the VALB staff. Photos by Eric Levenson

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# Spain in the summer of '95

by Gabriel Jackson

Spain, on May 28, 1995, held elections for its seventeen autonomous governments. There are three separate tiers of elections under the constitution: general elections for the national parliament, the Cortes; autonomous elections for the regional governments; and municipal elections.} The elections indicated a continuing strong trend towards the replacement of the socialists by the Popular Party of Manuel Aznar as the majority party. PP governs either alone or in coalition in all the autonomies except Andalusia and the Basque provinces.

The Andalusian victory illustrated the interesting fact that the PSOE has become the party of the rural working class: in part because the technical modernization of agriculture in the south has really benefitted what used to be the poorest provinces of Spain, and in part because the illegal but widely tolerated collection of unemployment benefits by people who are partly employed in the subterranean economy makes it decidedly worthwhile for those citizens to continue voting socialist. The Basque victory indicates that the Basque nationalists prefer to cooperate with the socialists, and judge Aznar to be either too centralist, or simply not competent to be Prime Minister.

Politically and psychologically the most dramatic aspect of all the post-electoral situation is the determination of Felipe Gonzalez to remain in office. The financial scandals, the revelations of corruption by the former Civil Guard chief, the revelations about state terrorism in the fight against the ETA (the Basque separatist movement), and most recently the revelation that the information services of the Department of Defense (CESID) had been wiretapping numerous prominent personalities, including the King, have steadily reduced the credibility and the moral standing of the government and the governing party.

I think Gonzalez holds on for the following reasons:

- Like many political leaders he tends to consider himself indispensable (*le parti, le gouvernement, c'est moi*).
- The older generation, people fifty and over, continue to fear that the PP really represents a Franco type restoration in democratic disguise, and the PSOE leadership certainly plays to this fear.
- Spain will hold the rotating presidency of the European Committee for the second half of 1995 and Felipe is determined not to leave office without serving in that capacity.

Of these reasons, the third is the best. Gonzalez really is the man who brought Spain into Europe after three centuries of isolation, and he is the first Spanish politician since Juan Negrin to speak with authority, as an equal, in European councils. On this point his personal wishes coincide with the interests of Spain and Europe. But the first two reasons are unfortunate. There are sev-

eral very able ministers who could serve as Prime Minister, and it would be good for the health of Spanish democracy for the present Prime Minister to take political responsibility for the economic and police scandals that directly involve persons whom he named to office.

As for the second reason, there are undoubtedly many nostalgic Franquistas in the PP, but there is a majority, especially younger professional and business people, and university students, who intend to prove that the new democratic Spain has a conservative party comparable to the conservative and Christian Democratic parties of Europe since 1945.

Ken Loach's movie, *Land and Liberty*, has been a box office hit in Spain, and with mild reservations I recommend it to all vets who are not still fighting the Stalinist/Trotskyite battles of the thirties. There are two particularly fine sequences, I think: the opening scenes, where the English volunteer, not yet knowing a word of Spanish or Catalan, becomes a comrade through gestures, embraces, exchanges of cigarettes and sandwich goodies in the train from Port Bou to Barcelona; and the debate among the villagers, after they have seized the town government, as to whether they should distribute the land to individual peasants, or collectivize it. I've read dozens of essays about the land reform question, but never have seen such accurate dramatization of what it meant to Spanish villagers. My main reservation is that the movie exploits the current fad for blaming all sins on the Communists. You would think it was Stalin, and not the appeasing democracies, who killed the Spanish Republic. ■

## The Volunteer

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799 Broadway, Rm 227  
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Leonard Levenson

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# Toronto honors the Mac-Paps

by Irma Penn

In Toronto's Queen's Park, nestled in a grove of trees, a boulder brought from Gandesa was unveiled on June 4. It bears a commemorative plaque inscribed:

*The "Mac-Paps" were a unit of the International Brigades, a volunteer force recruited worldwide to oppose the fascist forces bent on overthrowing the government of Spain. Formed in 1937, the battalion was named for the leaders of the 1837 rebellions in Upper and Lower Canada. Despite their government's opposition, more than 1,500 Canadians volunteered to fight with the Republican forces in the Spanish Civil War. They fought courageously for their ideals, suffering heavy losses in major battles. About half survived to return home in 1939.*

Invited by the Minister of Canadian Heritage, Michael Dupuy, the event was attended by hundreds

of friends and veterans of the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion as well as a substantial news-media corps.

The ceremony, favored by the weather of a beautiful Sunday morning, began with the singing of "O, Canada" by the Shevchenko Choir who then presented a stirring rendition of the International Brigade ballad, *Viva La Quince Brigada*.

In the speeches that followed, members of the Canadian provincial and federal governments all stressed the historic significance of the Mac-Paps.

The Honorable David Warner, Speaker of the Legislative Assembly of Toronto, emphasized that the Mac-Paps' "valiant efforts in rising up against fascism goes to the heart and core of what our country is about ... to defend what is right."

He declared, "It was sad that the government of the day and successive governments did not recognize the courage to stand against fascism." He concluded: "The recog-

niton is long overdue and I will never forget. From the bottom of my heart, I thank you."

Señor Jose Zorlia, Consul for Spain in Toronto, praised and thanked the veterans for their efforts, saying, "You spoke the language of love."

Albina Guarnieri, Parliamentary Secretary to the Ministry of Canadian Heritage, who unveiled the plaque, stressed its significance as a recognition by the Ontario provincial government of the Mac-Paps' historic role.

Bill Kardash, a disabled Mac-Pap veteran, who had served in the Manitoba Legislative Assembly for 15 years, recalled, "We were the first to take up arms against fascism. Half of us came back. We were not conscripts. We went voluntarily. We are proud that La Pasionaria called and the people responded."

Kardash stressed that it took fifty years to achieve the Toronto

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*Continued on page 20*

## Culling the mail sack

### A Renaissance woman

Michele D. Gibbs, daughter of veteran Ted Gibbs, whose panegyric poem to her late parents appears in the centerfold, is an artist as well as poet. Born in Chicago in 1946, she was educated in history, literature and politics at the University of Southern California; Cambridge University; Brown University Graduate School; and the Institute for Policy Studies, Washington, D.C.

Her early career was as writer, teacher and curriculum innovator during which her contributions to African American, Women's and Workers' Studies helped to lay the foundation for continuing efforts at creative diversification.

Her work as a visual artist developed with no formal training but much practical experience acquired as a graphic artist and muralist in Grenada, Jamaica and the U.S.; and as a painter and sculptor in Mexico, her current home.

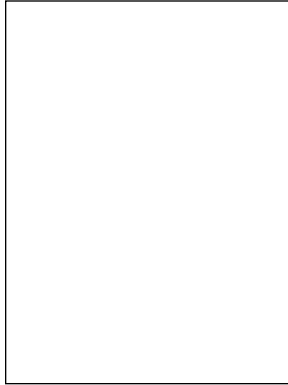
*Tapping Roots/Telling Truths* will be in a forthcoming book: *Riffin' to a Maroon Tune*; Broadside Press, Detroit, 1996. ♣

### A review reviewed

*Copies of Robert Colodny's review of Romerstein's Heroic Victims that appeared in the Spring issue of The Volunteer were mailed to some 200 academic historians by the VALB staff. None have yet commented adversely. The two responses below are from VALB members.*

I can't remember any article more outstanding than Bob Colodny's review of *Heroic Victims*, filled as it is with vital information and passion, the passion being perhaps more important. Reading Bob's account of the villainy of the capitalist world in connection with the Spanish War and World War II, and of the heroism of the fighters for what then appeared to be and what we can still hope will be humanity's Communist future, especially the account in his last few paragraphs of "our foreign brothers," we must be stirred anew by the memory of our youthful pride in our devotion to communism.

I have a comment concerning Bob's words: "There is no question but that there was a certain degree of historical blindness that distorted the vision, not only of the Spanish Civil War veterans, but of large parts of the population of the western world" concerning the German-Soviet Pact of August 1939. It is not clear from



Ted Gibbs in Madrid,  
1937

Bob's words whose vision was distorted and in what the distortion consisted.

For me, the distorted vision lay in the failure by many to see that pact for what it was: the only possible Soviet response to the refusal of the capitalist world to give up the strategy of using Hitler to carry out the capitalist world's imperative of destroying Soviet communism. To me it is clear that if the Soviet Union had not obtained the two-year respite the pact gave it, Hitler's troops might have captured Moscow, not Soviet troops Berlin, and with the entire continent of Europe under the undisputed rule of his armies, Britain a defeated and impotent shell, and a substantial, if not the major parts of the capitalist ruling classes of Britain and the United States being pro-Nazi, Hitler and his Japanese partners might have ruled the world under the hegemony of the thousand-year Reich.

In any event, my thanks to Bob Colodny. ♣

Saul Friedberg

Robert Colodny's comments on "The Brownie Pointer" in the last *Volunteer*, were, as usual for him, excellent, but a few additions are in order.

He refers to Poland as "a semi-fascist state that had participated with the Nazis in the dismemberment of Czechoslovakia." As I have pointed out often, fascism is an attempt in a country which has made some progress toward democracy and industrialization, to re-establish feudal (i.e. patron-client) social relations.

Since Poland had made little progress in industrialization and none toward democratization it was not semi-fascist, but still semi-feudal. The eastern half or more of Poland had been taken from the Ukraine, Byelorussia and Lithuania by a French-led, French-supplied Polish Army and was in a semi-feudal condition.

And we may note that the present reactionary Pope was from the liberal wing of the Polish Church. ♣

Clifton Amsbury

### In honor of Jimmy Yates

The Franklin, Maine, Molasses Pond Writers Retreat/Workshop has announced an annual award in honor of the late Lincoln Brigade veteran, James Yates. The \$250 prize will be given each May to a writer who has attended the Retreat and whose work has demonstrated unusual excellence and perseverance.

Jimmy had attended the Retreat as a writer-in-residence at various times in the years 1987 to 1992. His published autobiography, *From Mississippi to Madrid*, told of his life as a sharecroppers' son and his service in Spain.

Further information may be obtained by writing: Molasses Pond Writers Retreat, RFD, Box 549, Franklin, Maine 04634; phone: (207) 565-3652. ♣

# ALBA has panel at the Socialist Scholars Conference

by Sam Sills

The enduring passions of the Spanish Civil War surfaced anew in the ALBA panel, "New Books and Old Attacks," at the annual Socialist Scholars Conference held in New York City's Borough of Manhattan Community College, April 9, 1995.

The panelists, authors all, were Peter Carroll, co-chair of ALBA; Professor Robin D.G. Kelley, Professor William Watson, and Milton Wolff.

Peter Carroll, the first speaker, pointed out that the acclaim for his recent book *The Odyssey of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade*, had drawn several irrational attacks.

Referring to a review by Ronald Radosh in the *New Republic*, Carroll admitted that he was unprepared for the critic's "willingness to lie, deceive and distort under the guise of serious intellectual activity."

The rage of Radosh and several others, he argued, may have arisen from their fruitless search of the Soviet IB archives without finding evidence that Stalin had ordered any executions in Republican Spain. While such documents were absent from the Soviet records, nowhere else was there validation of a "reign of terror" or Communist conspiracy within the International Brigades or the Republican Army.

Carroll queried, "If in the end we have discovered that there were a lot of things wrong with the Soviet Union, and that the Soviet Communist Party did have a role in Spain, perhaps that role was not as excessive and extreme as people originally thought."

Executions, Carroll learned from interviews, did occur. He offered as an example one he believes was "spontaneous" — not

ordered by the Communist Party. "The monolith was not operating at all times in Spain, either in the worst cases or the least."

Carroll conceded validity to some of the criticism. In Moscow he had met with Morris Cohen, a U.S. veteran of the Lincoln Brigade who had spied for the Soviet Union in the postwar period. While the archives disclosed no evidence of espionage by other Lincoln veterans, several told him that they had probably aided the Soviets in ways that were illegal.

Citing an *Odyssey* review by historian Richard Gid Powers in *The New York Times*, Carroll said that, while there is no excusing the McCarthyite persecution of the Lincoln veterans, the case of Morris Cohen suggests, perhaps, that FBI surveillance was not entirely without justification.

Historian Robin Kelley, author of *Hammer and Hoe* and of the introduction to *African Americans in the Spanish Civil War*, following Carroll, made the point that much can be understood about anti-left critics when one notes that they consistently exclude the fundamental aspects of history — race and class. [The full text of Professor Kelley's remarks is on page 10.]

MIT historian William B. Watson followed, serving up new factual morsels about Ernest Hemingway's persistent wartime support of the Republican side of the SCW. [His paper appears in full starting on page 8.]

Milt Wolff concluded the speakers' presentations. He praised Hemingway for shaping a perspective on the war that other journalists adopted — one that forged a Gallup poll consensus of 75 percent of Americans favoring the cause of the Spanish Republic.

Wolff's main thrust was that the Lincoln veterans have nothing

to apologize for in their service to the Spanish Republic. They went to Spain as volunteers when there had not been mass resistance elsewhere to fascism. Inspired by the brave effort of the Spanish people, the Lincolns rushed to their aid.

Referring to his recently published novel, *Another Hill*, Wolff quipped, "My book hasn't received any adverse reviews. In fact it hasn't received many reviews." He attributed the harsh treatment some reviewers accorded Peter Carroll and others as an effort to mitigate their personal guilt at not having been on the front lines. "All this nitpicking about what happened to Nin [the Anarchist leader, reputedly assassinated]. They were as aware as we were about the fascists but they didn't act."

Wolff recalled that after his castigation of Hemingway, the writer responded, "I was a better Marxist than Freddie Keller [workingclass commissar of the Lincoln Battalion — ed.]. I was a better Marxist than Milt Wolff!" Wolff said, "And I believe it. We weren't Marxists at all, we were YCLers. We only had to sign a book and case out the women."

Wolff referred Watson to a letter to the critic Bernard Berenson in which Hemingway admitted that the description of Communist massacres in a peasant village in his *For Whom the Bell Tolls* was purely a creation of his imagination.

The question-and-answer session after the panelists' presentations brought a lively interplay between them and many in the audience, which numbered over eighty. Len Levenson moderated the event. ■

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Sam Sills was a co-director of the acclaimed documentary film, *The Good Fight*, about the veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade.

# Added to Memory's Roster

## Morris Cohen

**M**orris Cohen, a veteran of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade and of the U.S. Army in World War II, died in Moscow on June 23. Born in New York City to a Bronx immigrant fruit-peddler family, he went to local schools and attended Mississippi State College on an athletic scholarship, graduating in 1934.

While working as a reporter for a Memphis paper, Morris volunteered for Spain in the Spring of 1938. He suffered wounds to both legs in his first action at Fuentes on October 13. He also served in the U.S. Army during World War II.

In 1961, Morris and his wife emigrated to London and were operating an antiquarian bookstore when they were arrested and convicted for conspiring to steal British submarine warfare secrets for the Soviet Union. After serving nine years of a lengthy jail sentence, in 1970 they were exchanged for a British subject doing a 20-year hitch for distributing illegal literature. ❏

## Robert Cummins

**R**obert Cummins, a former newspaperman, scholar and two-time warrior against fascism, died at home in Ann Arbor, Michigan, on August 8. A memorial service, led by his niece, the Rev. Mary Higgins included a remembrance from Leslie Kish who served with him in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade in the lost struggle against Spain's Francisco Franco and his Nazi backers.

Bob got a measure of revenge following America's entry into

World War II. Stationed in England, he serviced the heavy bombers that did so much damage to Hitler's ambitions.

"He was a kind, shrewd and gentle man, scholar of history and an astute student of baseball, and he was so low key," John Shy, a professor of history at the University of Michigan, who chaired Cummins' doctoral dissertation committee, said Bob had gone to the U of M in quest of a doctorate after retiring from the *Ann Arbor News* in 1976.

After Cummins' WW II tour of duty, he took up a career in journalism, working for a chain of suburban newspapers in Chicago, returning to the *Ann Arbor News* where, at his retirement in 1976, he was a copy editor. ❏

*The above story is based on a column by Steven Cain that appeared in the Ann Arbor News on August 13.*

## Toby Jensky

*[Teruel, January 8, 1938 — We nurses grab a few hours sleep when we can, take these shacks (with no water or toilets) and turn them into hospitals with operating rooms. We heat the place with kerosene stoves, carry water from the center of town, and empty the bed pans in a ditch. We manage to get the guys comfortable with plenty of blankets, hot water bags and hot drinks.]*

**T**hus, Toby Jenski wrote of her experiences nursing in Spain during the Civil War's worst battles. Toby died at her Sandisfield, Massachusetts, home on April 25.

She sailed for Spain on April 14, 1937, with Dr. Edward Barsky's Fourth Medical Unit. They had been colleagues at Beth Israel Hospital in New York City.

Toby Jensky (left) with Sara Goldblatt at Valencia on their way to the Teruel front, December 15, 1937.

Toby epitomized the professional excellence and anti-fascist commitment that the American Medical Bureau demanded of its volunteers. Her letters reveal how she organized solutions to problems, how she adapted to danger and discomfort with common sense and self-deprecatory humor — but was generous in praising others:

*[September 1937 — I've been put in charge of the convalescent hospital. All I have to do is see that everyone is well-fed, clothed — and happy — and do their work. In my spare time I help arrange picnics for the 500 children of the nearby village. ...*

*There is a nice, comradely atmosphere. The patients and personnel work well together. [Patients] volunteer and are given jobs they are fitted for ...]*

Everything was shared, as Toby writes, "I contributed half

## Added to Memory's Roster

*the strudel to Salaria's wedding last night. We had a good supper. ... But what the hell, it isn't every day we have a wedding."*

She volunteered for the bitter Teruel front:

*[January 1938 — In this place it's kind of hard. ... We were all frozen and hungry. It was setting up one hospital after another, working for a few days, and then evacuating them, and on to the next. The bombing and strafing was pretty heavy. My diet was mostly bread and onions, but I seem to thrive on it. I like that sort of work and life much better than in the base hospital.]*

Toby returned from Spain and nursed at Beth Israel in New York City until her retirement. For years she helped Frederica Martin gather the primary sources documenting the history of the American Medical Bureau. That collection (now at ALBA) memorializes the contributions of Toby and her comrades. Her 1937 words from Spain remain inspirational: "Here's hoping we beat hell out of the fascists soon." ❏

— Frances Patai

### Hans Jorgensen

The Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade lost their oldest member, Hans Peder (Pete) Jorgensen, 94, who died at a nursing home in Minneapolis, Minnesota, on May 12. Pete was born in Denmark in 1901. At the age of 18, he emigrated with his parents to the United States.

Pete's family settled in Askov, Minnesota, where he left for Spain in February 1937. Enrolling

in the base at Tara-zona, he listed his vocation as a "cultivator." Assigned to the machinegun company of the Lincoln Battalion, he received a severe arm wound at Belchite but returned to action at Celadas, fighting through the Teruel campaign and the Ebro retreat.

In World War II he served in the U.S. Army. A political activist throughout his life, in 1951 Pete resettled in Askov where he resided until his death. ❏

### Stanley Junas

Lincoln veteran Stanley Junas died in Oakland, California, on June 9. In World War II he served in the U.S. Navy. Stanley, a longtime resident of Grand Rapids, Michigan, received the Michigan State ACLU award as Civil Libertarian of the Year in 1974. ❏

### Thomas Keenan

Tommy was a quiet man who kept to himself. I met him after the Rank and File Seaman's strike of 1936-37 when I was an under-paid (mostly un-paid) organizer of the seamen in the Port of Houston, Texas.

I remember the first time I heard Tommy speak. It was not a long speech but every word he uttered was to the point. I learned then that Tom Keenan was a profound thinker.

I did not see Tommy again for ten years. This time we met in Baltimore just before the 1946 strike of the Masters, Mates and Pilots union. Both he and I had become ship captains. We had

sailed as deck officers all during World War II.

We got a chance to swap stories. We recalled the names of so many friends and shipmates who were killed in the war. I learned from Bill Bailey, in whose machinegun company he had served, that he had gone to Spain and fought in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade with bravery and distinction.

During the McCarthy period, Tommy Keenan was denied the right to go to sea. He went to work in the steel industry. When the U.S. government finally lifted the blacklist, he returned to sea and sailed until his health forced him to quit. He and his wife Rose retired to their home in West Palm Beach, Florida. He died suddenly on March 17 of this year.

Tommy Keenan, like so many others who participated in the early struggles in the maritime industry, will be remembered as a person who gave his all. He left indelible footprints in the sands of time. ❏

— Paul J. Jarvis

### Victor Strukl

It is with great sadness that I write this letter. My grandfather Victor Strukl, who died on July 14, 1994, was my inspiration and my hero. When things were tough in my life and I needed inspiration, I spoke to my grandfather or thought of the trying life he lived.

Victor Strukl was born in Trieste, Austria-Hungary, in 1903. His father died before his birth, and he was the only child out of four children to survive childhood. As a boy he fought with the Austrian Army, helping

*Continued on page 21*

# Hemingway in the Spanish Civil War – New facts and facets

by William B. Watson

How many of you have heard of the Emergency Ambulance Committee? How many know that Hemingway wrote an article for the Soviet newspaper *Pravda* in the summer of 1938? How many know that Hemingway made a secret trip behind fascist lines with a guerrilla outfit to blow up an enemy train?

Very few people do.

I am going to tell you some things about Ernest Hemingway's involvement in the Spanish Civil War that were certainly not widely known during the war and have only recently been discovered through historical research.

Before that, let me emphasize something about Hemingway that you do know. Ernest Hemingway was a writer. No matter what else Hemingway did in Spain and elsewhere during the Spanish Civil War, he was a writer, and a writer's job in war, he told a jam-packed audience in Carnegie Hall in 1937, does not change. A writer's job is to tell the truth, only in war sometimes you have to take risks to get the truth. But the job is the same.

That was a typical hemingway maxim — short and to the point. It concealed, however, as much about the man as it revealed, and it oversimplified what was often a very complex situation. Nonetheless, his main point is still valid: writers, good writers, that is, don't mess with the truth. Their job is to tell the truth, no matter what it takes to get it and no matter what it costs to tell it.

I think it fair to say that as a writer — as a newspaper correspondent, that is — Hemingway on numerous occasions took considerable risks and displayed exemplary

courage to get the truth, to get the facts for himself, to see with his own eyes and to hear with his own ears what was happening. That took guts, and he did not have to do it that way. Every side in this war had press offices and press handouts. You could even stay in the French town of Hendaye just over the Spanish border, if you wanted to and, as William Carney of *The New York Times* sometimes did, report the war in Spain from that pleasant haven while pretending that you were actually there. Hemingway did not do it that way.

No, Hemingway was a writer who knew that a writer does not get anywhere without true facts backing him. Of course, Hemingway's reports from the Loyalist side remained optimistic and hopeful that the Republic could somehow triumph, but they were never misleading, never mendacious, never propagandistic, and certainly never somebody else's handouts.

If Hemingway, in 1937, had been just a newspaper correspondent, his Carnegie Hall maxim about a writer's job not changing in wartime would have fit him to a T. But I said Hemingway was a writer, not a newspaper writer. Yes, in Spain, over the course of a year, from the Spring of 1937 through the Spring of 1938, he wrote news dispatches on the war. But, in his view, that was not writing.

Writing, for Hemingway, was the little piece he did about the old man at the Amposta bridge during the retreats in the spring of 1938. That piece, scarcely 850 words long, was writing because it created a drama, a character, and a powerful moral dilemma for the narrator at its end that made it much more powerful and memo-

He said that a writer's job is to tell the truth, only in war sometimes you have to take risks to get the truth. But the job is the same.

rable than any piece of straight reporting could ever achieve.

Arnold Gingrich, the editor to whom Hemingway sent the story, said that he thought "these short punches" as he called the story, "do more good for the Loyalist cause than thousands of words of straight reporting." I think he was right, and, more importantly, Hemingway thought so too. It was the last story Hemingway ever included in his collected short stories.

So when I say that Hemingway went to Spain as a writer, I mean to say that he went as a writer of fiction. For a while he wrote news dispatches, but his true craft, his real being, his soul lay in the realm of his imagination, and that is a truth he could not reveal in his Carnegie Hall speech. The writer Ernest Hemingway was in Spain not just because he loved Spain as he loved no other country, and because he supported the Republican government against the fascist and military rebels, but also because he was in search of material for his next novel.

As a writer, Hemingway was in trouble in 1936 when the Spanish Civil War broke out. He had not written a novel in seven years, and the one he was working on — it eventually became *To Have and Have Not* — was going badly.

He very much needed to write a successful novel, for not only had he not written a novel in seven years, but the two books he had published in the thirties — *Death in the Afternoon* and *Green Hills of Africa* — were critical and commercial disappointments. I have no doubt,



therefore, that once it became apparent, in November 1936, that the war in Spain was going to last for some time because the Franco forces could not take Madrid, Hemingway recognized this war would provide him with material that might just save his failing career.

This may seem opportunistic to those of you who went to Spain for idealistic reasons, but I want to point out that there is one important difference between a combat soldier and a writer. A soldier can display great courage and initiative in battle and win a medal or some other commendation. That soldier never has to prove his or her courage again. It has been established; it can't be taken away. Reputation for a writer is a different matter altogether. Writers who win the praise of the public and of the critics the first time out, or any time out for that matter, have to do it again the next time or else they are not considered successes. Every writer knows that once you are at the top, it is damn hard to stay there. Unlike courage in battle, nothing for writers is proven once; their reputations must be reestablished every time.

In the end, looking back over the more than fifty years since *For Whom the Bell Tolls* was published, I think we can now say that this novel did save Hemingway's reputation as a major American writer, and it was the war, of course, that provided him with material that made it possible for him to write a successful novel. As he said at one point as he was about to go to the war in Spain, there are only two great subjects for a writer: war and love. Just to be safe, *For Whom the Bell Tolls* had both.

What I have just said about Hemingway the writer and his relationship to the Spanish Civil War as a writer may or may not be news to you, but they were certainly news to me last year when I realized just how much his final reputation as a writer was owed to that novel and to the war that made it possible.

I began with a few pieces of tantalizing information about his involvement in the war that you may not have known before, so I'd better deliver on my promises.

- The Emergency Ambulance Committee was set up by Hemingway, Martha Gelhorn and Tommy Shevlin in order to collect money, mostly in Hollywood and the West Coast, for the purchase of ambulances for the Spanish Loyalists. About \$24,000 was raised in some six or seven weeks, primarily on the strength of Hemingway's

Every writer knows that once you are at the top, it is damn hard to stay there. Unlike courage in battle, nothing for writers is proven once; their reputations must be reestablished every time.

fame and eloquence and/or Joris Ivens' fine documentary film, *The Spanish Earth*.

- The *Pravda* article. I wish I could tell the story about Charlie Scribner, Jr.'s, reaction to my discovery of this unknown piece of Hemingway writing. Suffice it to say that Scribner was not too eager to have Hemingway's name associated with the Communists. "Publish it where it won't be read by too many people," he said, "like *The Hemingway Review*." I, on the other hand, wanted to publicize it because I thought it demonstrated, as well as anything could, the broad reach of the Popular Front that was mobilized for the defense of the Spanish Republic. I won that one. It was published in the *Toronto Star* and then syndicated throughout North America. It is a fine piece of Hemingway outrage against the bombing and shelling of civilians in Madrid — fascist barbarism was its theme.

- As for Hemingway's trip behind enemy lines, the fact that it was a secret trip and that Hemingway never wanted anybody to know about it has made the trail harder to follow. He kept it a secret all his life because he liked everybody to think that in writing his novels he invented everything out of his own imagination. The truth was, however, that he prepared himself to write his novels with a lot of careful research so that their realism would be as accurate and believable as possible.

Since Hemingway knew that he would have to write his Spanish Civil War novel right after the war, and not years later as he had done with *A Farewell to Arms*, his novel about the First World War, he had to do the research while the war in Spain was still going on. So when he and Martha Gelhorn and Herbert Matthews of *The New York Times* came upon this guerrilla outfit just north of Teruel in late September 1937 — they were on an official inspection tour of the Teruel front — he knew this was the opportunity he had been waiting for.

Five weeks later he returned to the guerrillas with permission to take part in one of their operations. On the last night of October, they walked over a mountain pass down into the next valley and blew up a rebel train heading for the city of Teruel. They made it back to their base that night, had a big meal of roast lamb and wine, and a few hours later Hemingway was off to Valencia for a good night's sleep before returning to Madrid.

I found all of this out through a story that the Polish leader of the guerrilla outfit told to a fellow Pole in the late 1980s, a story that finally got into print in the late 1930s thanks to the efforts of Belgium IB vet Jacques Grunblatt and his wife Hilda. At first I did not believe the tale, but gradually I realized, thanks to some documents that were once in Hemingway's possession (and were then in the hands of a collec-

# The critics' dilemma

by Robin D. G. Kelley

In the light of publication of Peter Carroll's remarkable book, *The Odyssey of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade*, and the flurry of book reviews that followed, I want to say something about the current public discussion — and the public silences — surrounding the history of the International Brigades. As the critical responses to recent works on the Spanish Civil War reveal (Carroll's work included), liberal and conservative reviewers still suffer from incredible "tunnel vision" when it comes to the Lincoln Battalion. Most reviewers zero-in on the damage caused by "Communist domination," the number of executions behind Republican lines, or other aspects of the story that contain an element of sensationalism.

Therefore, reviewers often miss the most interesting and complicated parts of the story. For example, the issue of race and the experiences of African-American, Puerto Rican, Cuban and other volunteers never really figure into these debates despite the richly documented work on the subject by Carroll, Danny Collum and Victor Berch, and Marc Crawford and William Loren Katz, to name a few. When "race" is taken up as an issue, it is often reduced to a couple of sentences about the Brigades' policies — not what people of color did or experienced. This is unfortunate, for the current tensions between blacks and Jews (the latter comprising at least 30 percent of the Lincoln Brigade), these stories are of utmost significance.

Not surprisingly, then, when James Yates published *From Mississippi to Madrid*, it received very little attention from either the mainstream press or academic publications. And I've been trying to convince some university presses that they ought to publish Vaughn Love's unpublished memoir about his experiences as a Black south-

erner who discovered the Left in New York and wound up in Spain. (To add insult to injury, keep in mind that we are living in an age when Black academics and ex-criminals-turned-journalists can demand upwards of \$25,000 for their life stories!). *African Americans in the Spanish Civil War* by Danny Duncan Collum and Victor Berch was only reviewed in a handful of obscure places. And in reviews of my most recent book, *Race Rebels: Culture Politics, and the Black Working Class*, the essay on Spain is never mentioned.

Why the silences? Because critics persist in returning to the same old debates about Stalinism and invariably treat people of color and workers more generally as marginal to the real story. Furthermore, despite the fact that at least 40 percent of the U.S. volunteers were industrial workers, the dominant actors in the story are usually traditional intellectuals (writers and students) or autodidacts with amazing talent for writing. They dominate the Spanish Civil War largely because they wrote the story. Yet, the very presence of ordinary working people — people who, for the most part, had never traveled outside the country — risking their lives for the cause of liberty, made the Lincoln Brigade much more than another episode in Stalinist intrigue. It demonstrates that internationalism is not the preserve of those we call "intellectuals," that assembly line workers and even sharecroppers are capable of seeing their own struggles tied to working people throughout the world. Besides, the very fact that working people, regardless of how they were recruited, volunteered to fight fascism abroad, is an astonishing example for the current generation of activists.

The focus on Stalinism also tends to submerge the struggle among volunteers themselves (as

rank-and-file troops) over internal democracy in the midst of war. We must not lose sight of the incongruous nature of the aims of war and the war in-and-of-itself. There has never been a war without authoritarianism, terror, deep psychological wounds — and Stalinism, as it were, simply acted as a catalyst to inevitable war-time tensions. What happened behind the lines was undoubtedly painful precisely because the volunteers came there hoping to defend and ultimately help build a different kind of society. This is why they fought tenaciously over the issue of governance within the ranks, and why punishments, disciplinary actions, and executions loom so much larger in the collective memory of those involved.

There is much more we need to understand about the war and the Lincolns' role in it. Despite powerful films like *The Good Fight* and Peter Carroll's richly detailed survey, not to mention accounts by Al Prago, Alvah Bessie, Hugh Thomas, Arthur Landis, George Watt, Milt Wolff, Marc Crawford and William Loren Katz, and a host of others, we can still use a more textured rank-and-file view of the daily experience of volunteers whose political ties were less powerful and whose understanding of the situation less "official."

We could use an American version of Ronald Fraser's *Blood of Spain* — a deeply textured oral history of the Civil War in Spain from the perspective of Spaniards. John Gerassi's book, *Premature Anti-Fascists*, was to do this but it fell short of the mark.

The sad truth of the matter is that in 1995, almost six decades after the Spanish Civil War and in the midst of a hostile conservative climate, it might be too late for such a book to be written. ▀

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*Robin D. G. Kelley is Professor of History at New York University. This is the text of his presentation at the Socialist Scholars Conference held at the Borough of Manhattan Community College, New York City, April 9, 1995.*

# Rebels Without a Pause

From **SARASOTA**, Milt Felsen reports that he was reelected, unopposed and by acclamation, to the board of directors of the Directors Guild of America, a post he has held continuously since 1963.

Milt is currently at work as executive producer of a TV documentary series (13 episodes at this point) featuring great film directors. As of now, the project appears headed for HBO.

Charlie Nusser's ashes were ceremoniously scattered at **JARAMA**, last September, by Lou and Anne Gordon, and Tom Entwhistle. They later toured the Aragon battlefields.

In Madrid, Lou and Anne visited with Amaya Ruiz Ibarruri and Irene Falcon at the fundacion Dolores Ibarruri. While there, after screening *The Good Fight* for two university classes of American students, one in Madrid, the other at Alcala de Henares, Lou talked about the SCW and fielded questions from the audience.

While in Madrid, he also met with the Scott paperworkers union of the UGT who are sharing the same employer problems as the union members of the parent U.S. corporation.

On a more personal note, Lou advises that Caldo Gallego as served in Madrid is the best soup in the world and addictive. He indicates that he and Anne will soon return to Spain for a repeat engagement of lectures, more touring and "eating that soup."

**SEATTLE:** Bob Reed sends an article from the July/August 1995 issue of *Earthcare Northwest* by David Buckley. It reads, in part:

This summer there is an exhibition of wood sculptures by Elias "Dutch" Schultz at the Nordic Heritage Museum in Ballard. It's a rare opportunity to witness the art of one of Seattle Audubon's most interesting and respected members. Dutch Schultz has been working with wood for over seventy years, and his show reflects a life full of history and personal experience. While each sculpture is a unique piece of craftsmanship, the collective show is powerful because it reveals Dutch's history across eight decades, two continents and two major wars, as well as here in the Northwest.

Dutch Schultz has been an active member of Seattle Audubon for almost ten years. He began birding when health concerns limited his love for mountain climbing and backpacking. And in typical "Dutch" style, he immersed himself in birding, maintaining a vigorous level that for most of us in our seventies and eighties seems, at best, quite improbable. For Dutch, however, it's another chapter in a remarkable life.

Dutch was born in 1910 in New York City. He was introduced to art and wood sculpture through a teacher in vocational high school. During his teens and early twenties, Dutch apprenticed as an ornamental carver in

a picture frame company. Because the work wasn't steady, he began working on the docks as a longshoreman in New York in the early 1930's. It was at this time that Dutch's opposition to fascism which was on the rise, both here and abroad, led him to Spain where he joined the International Brigade and fought Franco's troops during the Spanish Civil War.

Dutch first came to Washington when he joined the U.S. army and trained with the Tenth Mountain Division at Fort Lewis and on Mount Ranier. Dutch decided that Washington was where he wanted to live and he settled there in the 1950's. He continued his career as a longshoreman until 1972, allowing him to pursue his passion as a sculptor, which he continues at his own shop in Fremont.

Dutch has always been interested in birds, but being a climber wasn't exactly conducive to study. "When I was climbing or backpacking it was hard to look at birds when hanging on a rope or stuck in a rainstorm in the Olympics!" Over the last fifteen years, he's becoming more and more involved in birding. "At first, I just went out and looked at birds by myself. Then a friend told me to join the

Dutch Schultz at work in his studio.

Audubon society. There I met other people interested in birds and began to go out on field trips and going birding with them. ... It's difficult to get out on field trips as often as it was only a few years ago. ..."

Dutch's love for birds is evident in a sculpture entitled *The Lover*. ... *The Lover* depicts a man holding a kestrel in his hands. For Dutch an important aspect of the piece is that the man holds the kestrel freely without jesses or ropes tied to the bird's legs. "I love birds and hate to see them tied up or trapped, just like I hate to see people trapped. It's like having a ball and chain on." A moving statement by a man whose love of birds is part of a lifetime commitment to the struggle for freedom and dignity. ■

# tapping roots / telling truths

by  
**Michele  
D. Gibbs**

i am not cold  
by nature  
but was forced to be  
that way again  
with an anger like dry ice  
when i heard my mother  
at 72  
shot and killed,  
her breath spliced  
by an unknown youth  
who thought  
whatever she resisted giving him  
in her handbag was worth her life.

as he fled  
she bled to death  
on the walkway to her home  
in a manner  
becoming normal  
in the U.S.A. today.

he, too, lost in soul  
to know  
what she held fast to  
was not property –  
but dignity –  
hers, and his, too –  
everything he threw away,  
like the gun,  
in his run for safety.

only a week before  
recovering from a stroke,  
she spoke so:  
“Oh, you know me, dear,  
I’m a survivor.”  
there was no way  
she would go from this earth  
of her own free will;  
there was too much  
still to do.

as a Russian Jew  
her childhood knew life  
on the cindered sidewalks  
of Chicago’s Halsted Street,  
the stopping place for those in flight,  
from the terror of the Tzarist night.

then, too,  
her fight was for the right  
to roam free,  
finish public school,

fashion for herself  
the tools to give the lie  
to any  
who regarded her a fool.

and, when in her teens  
she followed her elder sister Lillian’s lead  
and joined Chicago’s Young Communist League,  
no word of caution, danger,  
might her mother, Fannie, plead  
that my mom, Paula, would heed,  
she knew  
what she was made to do.

so in 1930, too,  
when she met my father Ted,  
a Black man from Texas  
whose path had led from there across the nation  
to Seattle’s docks  
where the shock wave of a general strike  
carried him into the Party’s ranks,  
through organizers’ school  
and sent him to Chicago  
to pool his strength with others  
in the gruelling task  
of mobilizing the Depression’s unemployed masses

they found each other in the fray  
when work required holding cops at bay  
to stay evictions –  
the order of the day for millions  
who – then like now – turned gray  
at seeing their lives  
dumped in the street that way.

1936  
The war in Spain.  
and Ted Gibbs, along with uncles, cousins, comrades  
enlisted in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade.  
three years  
in which the women  
carried on alone at home.

the men returned  
scarred inside and out;  
for the time  
unable to rout the Fascist terror  
which grew in clout ‘til it convulsed the world.

Paula, still knew what she was about.  
she married Ted  
as profits fed the war machine  
and Amerikan racism  
kept nerves razor keen.

no matter.  
 they weren't invincible  
 but knew no other way to live,  
 than by their principles.  
 Red-baited, black-listed  
 they worked, struggled, loved,  
 kept faith.  
 existed.

by my birth in '46  
 post-war Amerika  
 opened a new bag of tricks,  
 called 'containment' abroad,  
 Chicago's version  
 was the Red Squad.  
 so livid were the police to see we three:  
 Ted, black  
 Paula, white  
 and me  
 together and at liberty  
 they'd run their cars  
 right up on the curb  
 and back us up against the wall  
 when we refused  
 to be perturbed.

Feds. at the door  
 and cops on the beat:  
 that was the school  
 of the streets we knew –  
 risk everything, say nothing,  
 and keep your cool.

Saying little in that Emmett Till time  
 my father worked:  
 electrician, carpenter, plumber, gardener,  
 cook, breadwinner –  
 guardian  
 against the beasts of degradation  
 beating on our door.  
 he'd take a storefront  
 and create a home.  
 carve a garden from an alley,  
 coax grass up through the stone,  
 work his long-limned artist's fingers  
 to the bone  
 so the leavings we were allowed to live in  
 shone with the light of love.  
 he was a painter of scenes  
 his life a song  
 from a soul bound to take a stand  
 to say this/ and that/ were wrong  
 fashioned from a longing to be free.

this legacy he passed on to me.  
 when, finally, he died,  
 from too much pressure, grieving, beatings  
 which never did  
 bend his back or tan his hide –  
 Paula continued on her own.  
 she didn't mind, she said,  
 being alone.  
 it gave her time to think.

it was 1960 by then  
 and my turn to join the fight.  
 Paula would wink, and say:  
 "You know, you can get killed that way."  
 i'd laugh, agree,  
 and do just what their lives  
 had taught to me:  
 buoying me up  
 and giving me eyes to see  
 the connections between us  
 commitment weaves.

well, she kept going and i did, too,  
 for the next twenty years  
 we saw it through  
 from Watts to Birmingham,  
 Detroit, Philadelphia, Viet Nam:  
 years of uninterrupted war ...  
 until i chose a further shore  
 and made that my home.

she saw me off,  
 wished me well,  
 and remained  
 to battle barbarity's swell  
 in the belly of the beast.  
 she said, "Remember, Michele,  
 if it's worth doing,  
 it's worth doing well."

that's how she was.  
 in death the same,  
 refusing to give in, disdaining tame,  
 standing firm, despite the cost.

so in these times of decay,  
 when it's hard to see the light of day,  
 not to mention victory,  
 may their spirits abide,  
 always soar free,  
 and not be lost to history. ▣

Paula Gibbs



# News From Abroad



## Germany

BERLIN — We have this sad communication from the surviving German comrades of the IB, now united in a section of the IVVdN e.V. — the organization of the victims of the Nazi regime.

*Dear Comrades: We are grieved to inform you that our comrade Karl Kormes, vice-chair of our task force, died on April 9, 1995. On March 16th, returning from a ceremony at the Seelower Heights Memorial, he sustained serious injuries in a traffic accident and never regained consciousness. His wife and the former journalist Guenther Kertsche were also killed.*

*His death was a serious blow. Comrade Kormes had spent many years under the most onerous conditions in Franco's prison camps and during the '50s was subjected to criticism, based on phony charges, by the leadership of the SED [the Socialist Unity Party of the former German Democratic Republic].*

*During the past ten years he contributed selflessly to the history, **German Volunteers in the International Brigades in Spain.** Through his extensive language skills, he made outstanding contributions to relations with foreign organizations of International Brigade veterans in many countries.*

*With his manifold activities and his political acumen, Karl played an important role in recent years in the successful work of our small collective of International Brigade veterans in the VdN where he was active in the executive.*

*We are aware that without him, it will be difficult to continue our former activities. We will miss him as comrade, friend and soul brother.*

*In the coming months we will concentrate on preparations for the 60th anniversary of the formation of the International Brigades.*

*We ask your indulgence for our inability to retain our former style and quality in this communication.*

Comrade Karl's personal history uniquely interwove with that of the Lincoln Brigaders, collectively and individually. That bond began after Karl was captured in 1937 in Spain where he shared harsh confinement with the Lincoln Brigade prisoners.

In a story exceeding the wildest fiction, he survived Franco's jails, wound up in North Africa as the Nazi forces were being driven out. He volunteered there for the U.S. special forces (the OSS). He received his training in North Italy in a school conducted by Lincoln veterans Irv Goff and Vince Losowski. ■

## Sweden

As reported from Oslo, in the Spring 1995 issue of *The Volunteer*, the Swedish IB veterans dissolved their organization earlier this year. An unannounced, unanticipated bank draft from them for 3,000 krona, payable to the VALB, arrived at our office in June. It increased our available funds by \$500.

The impetus and thoughtfulness of this gift invoke a gratitude that is truly beyond description. ■

## France

The Communist Party of France, in Paris on October 29, 1994, paid tribute to the French volunteers of the International Brigades at a historic time and place. The occasion was the 50th anniversary of the liberation of France and the site was the great meeting hall of the PCF headquarters on the plaza Fabien, named for the IB lieutenant and French Army colonel who died in the liberation of Alsace in World War II.

Colonel Henri Rol-Tanguy, as president, spoke for the association

of French Volunteers of the Spanish Republic, the IB veterans' organization. He was the commissar of the 14th International Brigade and a hero of the underground resistance movement in WW II, during the Nazi occupation. It was he who, in August 1944, as a commander of the Free French resistance army, alongside General LeClerc, received the capitulation of the German garrison in Paris.

Comrade Rol-Tanguy briefly traced the history of the Spanish Civil War as the prelude to WW II, emphasizing the role played by the International Brigades in that conflict and in the final defeat of the fascist Axis.

He was followed by Santiago Alvarez, speaking for the CP of Spain, who had been Political Commissar of the Army of the Ebro commanded by General Juan Modesto. Alvarez paid homage to the Brigadistas, stressing that the political, ethical and human values of the 1936-39 anti-fascist struggle serve today, far beyond the Spanish borders, to illuminate humanity.

The French CP building, designed by Courboisier, the late world-renowned architect, is on the site once occupied by the ramshackle wooden group of offices and cafeteria that most Internationals encountered in 1936-39.

They are memorialized by the engraving on a monument dedicated by the notables at the end of the meeting. It reads: "In this place, Mathurin Moreau, during the '30s, was housed the International Anti-fascist Committee, serving the French and foreign Volunteers of the International Brigades in Spain."

At the conclusion of the commemoration, Rol-Tanguy directly addressed the many Spanish notable and veterans who were present, asking: "When are you going to invite us to the inauguration of a thoroughfare, in Barcelona or other



## News From Abroad



great Spanish city, named the 'Avenue of the International Brigades'?" ❏

### Switzerland

The Swiss Association of International Brigade Volunteers dissolved itself in early 1994. The ceremony took place in the Zurich City Hall. The group had been reduced to some 30 people, 17 of whom between 74 and 84 years old, were present.

There were 639 Swiss Volunteers, 19 of them women, who fought in the International Brigade. In addition, 70 IBers of other nationalities went from Switzerland. They were refugees from Germany, Austria, Italy, etc.

It is known also that some 34 Swiss served in Franco's army — some in the Spanish Foreign Legion.

The remaining treasury of the Swiss IB association was turned over to the Swiss Workers Aid Organization based on the trade unions and the Social Democratic Party.

The farewell ceremony featured addresses by veterans Hans Hutter of Winterthur and Paul Tross of Zürich and a talk delivered by the mayor of the city. A highlight was a speech by Frau Ruth Dreifuss of the Federal Governing Council — its second female and first Jewish member. She emphasized that the Volunteers had been a shining example of international solidarity and were morally exonerated from all guilt despite being sentenced to prison terms under Swiss law banning service in a foreign army.

There remain four memorial monuments in Switzerland: a plaque at the Maison du Peuple in Geneva; one at the "Volkhaus" in Zürich; a memorial granite stone on top of Monte Ceneri in the Italian Swiss Canton of Ticino; and, an artistic terrazo in the small industrial town of Biasca, engraved with the names of its three volunteers.

The Swiss were a politically

varied batch of Communists, Socialists, Anarchists, a few Trotskyist sympathizers, union men, idealists, romantics, simple democrats and a few flotsams.

Interestingly, the largest group from the 24 Swiss cantons came from the Italian-speaking canton. They had been close to the realities of Italian fascism across their border. A high percentage were anarchists influenced by Italian anarchism. High unemployment in this area contributed, as well as a long tradition of leaving these narrow alpine valleys for better and different opportunities.

The farewell affair displayed photographs, books, magazines, posters and featured a roll call of the Volunteers who were present.

I continue to read *The Volunteer* with great nostalgia, passion and love. ❏

**Gino Baumann**  
Oficina de Correo,  
Barrio San Jose  
Covol de Alajuel, Costa Rica

### Canada

Ted Allen, Mac-Pap veteran, a prominent author of books and media scripts died in Toronto on Thursday, June 29. He was best known for his biography of famed International Brigade doctor, Norman Bethune, *The Scalpel, the Sword*.

Ted won an Academy Award nomination for his 1976 adaptation of Jan Kadar's *Lies My Father Told Me*, a story about a Jewish boy and his family in Canada. ❏

### England

LONDON — Bill Alexander's June 1995 International Brigade Newsletter reports on a pamphlet being prepared on the 57 local IB memorials emplaced in Britain.

The preparation of this unique

work is well under way. It will definitely be published by the 60th anniversary. The title, price and date of publication have yet to be finally arranged. Paul Preston, the eminent historian, has written a long introduction.

Bill Alexander has described the overall contribution of the British Brigaders in Spain. Colin Williams has supplied the story of each memorial and the personalities involved. John Gorman is supervising the graphics preparation. The British Roll of Honour will be reprinted to cap the record of a proud period of British history. ❏

### Czechoslovakia

PRAGUE — [translated from the Spanish]: Dear friends: My name is Milos Nekvasil (J. Vondracek in Spain). During the anti-fascist war, I was the commander of the Masaryk Battalion of the 129th International Brigade.

After the war I was held [in France] in the St. Cyprien camp, afterwards in the camp at Gurs and, at the end, in Argéles-sur-Mer. I escaped from the last named and fought in occupied France against the Nazis. After the Nazi defeat I returned to my own country.

I am married with two sons and four grandchildren. Today, my wife and I are pensioners.

We now have only few remaining veterans of the Brigades. Our activity as an organization is almost nonexistent. We also have little contact with the comrades in neighboring countries and with the Spanish comrades who were refugees in our country after World War II.

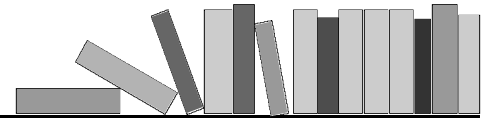
For all these reasons, we always await *The Volunteer* which is a unique periodical of the old veterans of the glorious war in Spain.

Thanks comrades and all the best to you.

With an antifascist *Salud*. ❏

**Milos Nekvasil**

# Book Reviews



## Overlooked but not forgotten

### THE LINCOLN BRIGADE:

#### *A Picture History*

By William Loren Katz  
and Marc Crawford

1989, Atheneum, cloth, \$14.95  
84pp., illustrated.

In the 58 years since the Lincoln Brigaders returned from Spain they carried out many historic projects and promoted numerous successful books on subjects near and dear to them. One of the latter, *The Lincoln Brigade: A Picture History*, despite being a bestseller at VALB affairs and adopted by many school curricula, has somehow been overlooked in these pages. This is an overdue rectification.

Marc Crawford, Adjunct Professor at New York University, and William Loren Katz, historian and editor, present in this slim volume a rare mix of comprehensive history and many unique photographs of the Lincoln Brigade at the battlefield and the rearguard.

The reader learns what the war was about, its unique role in the fight against fascism; the protagonists both within Spain and externally; the global scene and the war's effect on the thinking of millions of people. Also traced is the origin of the International Brigades — how they were organized; the many countries from which these men and women came; and the political and ethnic composition of the Volunteers, particularly the Americans.

Crawford and Katz succinctly depict the Great Depression years in which the Volunteers were formed by the politics and the struggles of the time. From these experiences, it was natural that the Lincoln Brigade became the first U.S. military unit in history to be fully integrated — horizontally and

vertically at all levels of service and command.

Storywise, this book depicts the main campaigns in which the Lincolns participated — Jarama, Brunete, Aragon, Teruel, and the Ebro, Gandesa and the Pandols. It also gives a glimpse into the guerrilla activity of Irv Goff, Bill Aalto and Cecil Kunstlich. In its pages one meets the heroes and heroines behind the lines — the doctors, nurses, ambulance and truckdrivers who performed the rearguard tasks necessary to support each man in battle.

The authors take the Lincolns through the IB Barcelona farewell parade in October 1938, where they heard the immortal Despedida (Farewell) delivered by La Pasionaria.

The final section of the book deals briefly with the work of the Friends of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, the homefront support organization, and the Lincoln veterans' service in World War II. The concluding chapter describes the thrilling 1986 return to Spain to commemorate the 50th anniversary

of the war. Marc Crawford and Bill Katz were there and, as the book makes clear, not as mere fellow travelers.

There's not an occasion where it wouldn't be appropriate for readers of *The Volunteer* to use *The Lincoln Brigade* as a significant gift. It's available through the VALB office for \$15 (P&H included). ▣

Moe Fishman

## Biography of a 'monster'

### FRANCO

#### *A Biography*

by Paul Preston: 1995

HarperCollins, \$ 37.50, cloth,  
1,002pp.

Paul Preston, a leading English scholar who has written extensively on all aspects of Spanish life, has undertaken the formidable task of presenting a detailed account of the life of Francisco Franco. This is a massive volume and whatever time the reader might want to spend on El Caudillo, the pickings are here.

The book's dedication none too subtly expresses Preston's regard for his subject as he thanks his family for allowing him to complete his task speedily so that he "did not have to spend too much time in the company of this monster."

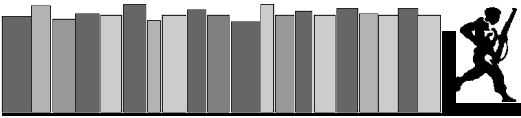
Preston explodes the prevalent myth that the Franco regime pursued a benign neutrality during World War II. In the early stages of that war, when the fascists were advancing in all directions, Franco desperately strove to join the Axis powers in their drive to overrun Europe. However, Hitler and Mussolini in the first months of the

## Peter Carroll gets an award

Peter Carroll, at a ceremony on May 30 in Berkeley, was awarded a silver medal by the The Commonwealth Club of California for *The Odyssey of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade*.

Peter's citation read: "This important study sets the involvement of Americans in Spain at the end of the 1930s into a larger historical context. The book provides a vision of the era and a record of individual lives grappling with the historical forces that shaped an era."





revolt were wary of an alliance with Spain's rebels. The country was in a state of near-famine, besieged by a strong guerrilla movement, and the regular army, two years earlier, had performed poorly in suppressing a popular uprising.

In the first stages of the war the fascist dictators were chary in their support of the rebels. Preston furthermore points out that there were clashing interests between Spain and Italy in the Mediterranean and North Africa.

Later in World War II, after the Nazi debacle on the Eastern front, when the defeat of his Axis friends became inevitable, Franco assumed an open posture of neutrality.

Preston tells the story of an Italian staff officer who witnessed the execution of thousands of Spanish villagers as the Franco forces advanced. When the Italian, himself no stranger to brutality, is appalled and questions the rebel officer ordering the atrocities, he is told, "These are our future enemies so it's best to deal with them now."

One must remember that this book is not a history of the Spanish

Civil War and, therefore, there are few references to the International Brigades and none of the American volunteers. Preston, in previous works, has dealt with them.

Obviously, this short review

cannot do full justice to Preston's work — but any serious reader will surely join the myriad of historians who hail it as the definitive biography of one who shaped the darker side of history. ■ A.S.

## ***Lifelong battle against racism***

**BLACK FIRE:**  
***The Making of An American Revolutionary***  
**by Nelson Peery: 1995,**  
**New Press; \$22.95, cloth, 348 pp.**

If Nelson Peery had been born a decade or so earlier, it's almost certain that his name would be on the roster of the African Americans who served in the Abraham Lincoln Brigade.

This autobiography covers a lifelong battle against racism. It began in a small Wisconsin rural town, continued in the schools and streets of Milwaukee and peaked during World War II service as an

infantryman in the Pacific theater of the war.

The bulk of Peery's tale is a nonstop melodramatic account of his service in a WWII Black infantry regiment from its training days in the jim-crow South through its bloody military campaigns in New Guinea and the Philippines.

Overriding the graphic drama of warfare against the Japanese is the endless battle against racism within the military establishment. Peery's tale of the U.S. suppression of the Hukbalahap struggle for Philippine independence is poignantly personal.

Peery refers at times to "left" influences in his early family life, including a visit paid by Ned Sparks, a Communist Party organizer. He describes a rearguard lecture to the troops by Bob Thompson, who had just won his DSC in the New Guinea campaign. Bob's subject was the Soviet rout of the Nazi armies in the battle of Kursk.

Peery also pays a knowledgeable tribute to Herman Boettcher whom he also encountered in the Papuan campaign.

The front matter of the volume carries an acknowledgement that is a summary of Peery's own life and a tribute to Meridel LeSueur who "... instilled in me a dialectic, a sense of history that led me to love America and her diverse people enough to write about them, to fight them, to fight with them — and to fight for them." ■ L.L.

## ***And what a scare it was***

**RED SCARE:**  
***Memories of an American Inquisition, An Oral History***  
**by Griffin Fariello: 1995**  
**W.W. Norton & Company**  
**\$29.95, cloth, 575pp.**

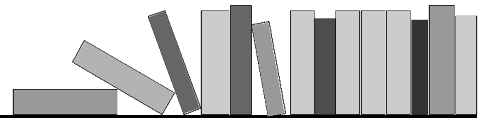
The title of this book is a precise description of its contents. The text is prefaced by a concise history of the twenty mid-century years, 1945-65, in which "McCarthyism" undercut democracy in American life.

Culled from taped interviews with over 150 women and men who were hounded by the official un-Americans, Fariello has chosen over 70 witnesses who tell it like it was.

Ranging the full spectrum of U.S. society, these are chilling as well as heroic vignettes of persecution and resistance. Among the three-score-and-ten are veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade and their families: Steve Nelson, Ring Lardner, Jr., Carl Marzani, Archie and Honey Brown (who earn double entries), Bill Bailey and Bob Colodny.

Sylvia Thompson, Bob's widow, receives a triple entry, including the story of the dogged, successful struggle to inter him in Arlington as a U.S. war hero. Her first quoting — the book's epigraph — is way out of context and should be corrected if, hopefully, a paperback edition is issued. ■ L.L.

# Book Reviews



## ***An exceptional soldier of 'the good fight'***

**THE EDUCATION OF  
A RELUCTANT RADICAL;  
BOOK 3  
*Spain, Munich and Dying  
Empires. An autobiography*  
by Carl Marzani: 1994  
Topical Books  
\$24.95, cloth, \$14.95 paper;  
575pp., illustrated.**

Carl Marzani's choice of *Reluctant Radical* for the title of this multi-volume autobiography has little to do with shyness or modesty. Rather, it accurately describes how his unique and eventful life was shaped. It identifies, too, the side of history where he chose to serve.

This third volume opens with Carl's rail journey in late December 1936. He was among some thousand volunteers, headed from France to Barcelona, to join the International Brigades. However, unlike his fellow passengers, Carl had not en-

trained to join the IB. He writes:

*I went to war in the spirit of a foreign correspondent. ... Almost from the beginning there were subtle pressures to become a volunteer. Step by small step I ended up at the front.*

That "step by step" progress had a Candide-like quality which peaked with Carl's service for several colorful but noncombat weeks in Durruti's Anarchist column. It was the time when George Orwell shared a similar experience but proclaimed quite different political views. These Carl sharply refuted then and throughout his later life.

Carl's military service ended when he heeded a warning from his friendly commanding "officer" that he was risking a death squad for his un-Anarchist ideas. By mid-January he had made his way back to London. Summing up his Spanish experience, he writes:

*I may not have contributed much to the Spanish Civil War. But Barcelona and the Durruti column had contributed massively to my understanding not only of politics and international affairs but of the complexity of human beings. Despite all my immigrant travels, all my stints as a worker, all my hitchhiking and living off the land, I had basically led a sheltered life protected by family, school and college. In Spain I grew up, and my life was altered forever.*

Carl returned to England as the fateful years of 1938-1939 began — the dismal time that witnessed the Nazi takeover of Austria, the death throes of the Spanish Republic and the signing of the Munich Pact.

The book's time span covers his first marriage; completion of his Oxford studies; joining the British Communist Party with his bride; a mini-grand tour honeymoon; and finally, a 30,000 mile hitchhike home to the USA, across Europe and Asia.

Carl's tale does not maintain a steady chronological progression. At times it reaches back to his childhood and college days or peeks into later years. These diversions range from anecdotal to philosophical. They all enhance a perception of Carl as an exceptional soldier of "the good fight." ■ L.L.

### ***Great deal for VALB and friends***

Many readers of *The Volunteer* are aware of the enthusiastically received program presented last February at the Bay Area Annual Dinner in Oakland, CA. *Postscript to a War* paid tribute to the Lincoln Brigaders through a dramatic reading of their own words from a wide range of source materials.

Responding to the many requests, the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA) has graciously given us permission to make a limited number of videotaped copies of this program available to the Lincoln vets, Associates and their families, solely for personal, non-commercial use.

In addition to the moving and eloquent reading by members of the San Francisco Mime Troupe, and the six-piece band who joined them in string versions of *Si Me Quieres Escribir*, *Venga Jaleo*, and other favorites, the hour-long color video tape includes introductory remarks by Milton Wolff, Bay Area Post Commander, and Peter Carroll, co-chair of ALBA, the emcee for the event.

The VHF tape can now be purchased for \$25, plus a \$3.50 shipping and handling fee. Checks should be made out to the Bay Area Post, and sent to VALB, P.O. Box 884354, San Francisco, CA 94188. Please allow two to three weeks for delivery. ■

Volume 4 of Marzani's *The Education of a Young Radical: From Pentagon to Penitentiary* was published within a few weeks of Carl's death earlier this year. It will be reviewed in the next issue of *The Volunteer*. Any or all of Volumes 1 through 4 may be obtained for \$14 each (including shipping) from the VALB office.



# ALBA at Work



By Bill Susman and Cary Nelson

## **Most of the Moscow Archives have arrived**

Six weeks ago a 40-pound container of microfilm from the Moscow Archives was delivered to the ALBA Archives at Brandeis University. This latest shipment contained the individual files of almost all the Americans who fought in Spain, as well as thousands of other precious documents: diaries of Lincoln Brigaders who died in Spain, many letters from family members, which for one reason or another (combat-casualty, incorrect address, etc.) never reached the men and women in the ranks.

The August shipment also included hundreds of documents of military communications — inter- and intra-battalion, brigade, division and army corps communications.

Among the archives still on ALBA's unfinished agenda are thousands of frontline and rear guard photographs for which copy negatives will be procured.

Also sought are the records of other international brigades, beginning with the English-speaking ones — Canadian, British and Irish — and Palestinian. Another high priority will be the records of the Cuban Volunteers, many of whom traveled from the USA. ▣

## **SCW posters to tour for 60th Anniversary**

Next year will mark the 60th anniversary of the Spanish Civil

War and many activists will commemorate the occasion. ALBA will be shipping about thirty of its colorful Spanish Civil War posters on a nationwide tour. It will open in New York at the Puffin Gallery on April 27, 1996, and run until May 27.

From mid-June to mid-August it will be at Berkeley, California; September to October at the Museum of Albuquerque, New Mexico; at Washington University, Seattle, from November through December.

In 1997, the exhibit will be at Centenary College in Shreveport, LA; from March to April at Texas A. & M.

The posters will be accompanied by blow-ups of black and white photographs of the Lincolns during the SCW years. Each poster's source will be identified and all Spanish and Catalan text will have an accompanying English translation.

Where possible, ALBA will try to organize at the exhibit halls continuous showings of films such as *Spain Between the Wars*, narrated by Eric Sevareid; and *The Good Fight*. Other events, including concerts, are being planned.

We will ask Lincoln veterans who live near the exhibit locales to make themselves available for participation.

As contracts for the exhibits are firmed-up, VALB and ALBA members and supporters will be notified of the scheduled dates and locales. We

anticipate that this tour will run through the next three years. ▣

## **New Board members announced**

ALBA has some new Board members. Joining us are Andrew Lee, Director of the Tamiment Library at NYU; also at NYU, Robin Kelley, Professor of History, author of the acclaimed preface to *African Americans in the Spanish Civil War*; film producer Fredda Weiss (recruited by co-worker Julia Newman).

Noted film director and writer John Sayles, an invaluable long-term supporter of VALB and ALBA, has also joined us. His tribute, "But What About the Guys in the Lincoln Brigade," that appeared in our 50th Anniversary brochure, has not been dimmed by time.

We also are happy to have added Barbara Dailey as our new executive secretary. She is proving a valuable addition to our staff. ▣

## **Responses on our SCW essay contest**

This project is especially dear to ALBA because it honors the memory of Board Member George Watt. In his name we were able to raise a \$25,000 endowment, the George Watt Memorial Fund, whose income will be used to award annual prizes for the best college student essays about the Spanish Civil War and the participation of the U.S. Volunteers. Many outstanding essays have already been submitted.

The first winners will be announced in April 1996. George, if he were with us, would feel proud. ▣

# VALB's 58th Anniversary

*Continued from page 1*

Nadler, U.S. Representative of New York's 8th Congressional District, (the storied "Upper West Side"). He presented a trenchant analysis of the Republican "Contract with America" and all it portends for the country.

Nadler's exposé of the real intent of the call to return power to the states was particularly pointed: "In areas like job safety and environmental protection the actual aim is not to hand over the power to regulate, but to end all such regulation. If the states have to compete for industrial investment by reducing the costs of workers' safety and the prevention of environmental degradation, the real result will be dead or injured workers and an environment laid waste."

Nadler concluded: "The real transfer of power — one of historic proportions — is from Congress's elected representatives to the large national and multinational corporations."

When the long round of applause for the Congressman's speech subsided, the guests, abuzz with comment, headed out. Many stopped to browse and buy at the VALB book display and the Fassinella poster table where Ralph autographed lithocopies of his work. ■

Cary Nelson

Mimi Turque

Henry Foner

## Toronto honors Mac-Paps

*Continued from page 3*

monument and it was time for full legislative recognition by the Canadian national government.

Among the surviving half-a-hundred Mac-Pap veterans who attended the celebration were Frank Blackman, Lee Burke, Maurice Constant, Joe Glenn, Amedee Grenier, Hans Ibing, Bill Kardash, Bill Matthews, Arden Nash, Jules Pavio, Marvin Penn, Paul Skup, Harold Sparks.

In attendance were Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade Jack Bjoze, Morris Brier and Saul Wellman, alongside Cuban IB veteran Mario Morales Mesa.

Although the Canadian Veterans' organization was dissolved a number of years ago, their unfinished tasks are being pursued by a recently formed Association of

Veterans and Friends of the Mackenzie-Papineau Battalion (AVFM-PB). Its commitment is fourfold: to consolidate, expand and make available Mackenzie-Papineau archival material; to organize a speakers bureau for schools; to prepare symposia and exhibits; and, to promote social events for members and the general public. The noted authors Margaret Atwood and Farley Mowat are among the sponsors.

A high priority for the AVFM-PB is the successful outcome of a campaign, long in progress, to erect an official Mac-Pap memorial on Parliament Hill in the national capitol of Ottawa. ■

*Irma Penn, a Canadian scholar, is a member of the Association of Veterans and Friends of the MacKenzie-Papineau Battalion.*

## Hemingway in the Spanish Civil War

*Continued from page 9*

tor), that this improbable story was very likely true. It certainly fit Hemingway's character and his willingness to take risks for the sake of his art, and he must have realized then that a story about guerrilla operations behind enemy lines was bound to be a good one.

So what is new in Spanish Civil War studies has been, for the most part, the product of discovery, and it

will undoubtedly be that way in the near future as well. New documents, new stories, and new interpretations to explain them will remain the basis for new understandings of the Spanish Civil War for some time to come.

Some of these new interpretations will be resisted, and perhaps some of the documents will be discredited and the stories modified, but that is how history continues to make progress — through discov-

ery, interpretation and debate. And that is how, too, our collective memory of these critical events is kept alive: by the stimulus of discoveries and by the debates and discussions they provoke. ■

*William B. Watson is professor of history at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. This is a slightly revised version of his talk in the ALBA panel of the Socialist Scholars Conference at the Borough of Manhattan Community College, New York City, April 9, 1995.*

## Added to Memory's Roster

*Continued from page 7*

defend his fatherland against the Italians.

When World War I ended, Trieste became part of Italy. As young man, Victor was in the Communist Party of Trieste. Among his friends was Vittorio Vidali.\* Mussolini was becoming powerful and Victor fought against Italian fascism. When Mussolini finally gained control of Italy, Victor left. He became an engineer on a ship and traveled around he world.

Victor settled in the United states in 1926. His first job was as a lumberjack in Oregon. He traveled in the United States, usually staying in Italian neighborhoods. He was living in New York when the Spanish Civil War started. Victor and a group of other men received funds from an Italian trade union to travel and fight in Spain. He used a forged Spanish passport and left under the name of Victor Friere Pozuelo. While in Spain he used the name Victor

Furlani.

He arrived in Spain in late October/early November 1936. From November 1936 to February 1937 he was a member of the Spanish Republican Army, transferring to the Abraham Lincoln Battalion in February 1937. In September 1937 he was transferred to the Garibaldi Battalion where he fought until the Internationals were sent home. He then rejoined a Republican unit where he fought until the bitter end.

When the war ended, he crossed the Pyrenees and was interned in a French concentration camp. He finally escaped and stowed away (with the help of a French Communist sympathizer) on a ship to America. Because he was not a citizen, he had again to sneak into the U.S.

When the U.S. entered World War II, Victor joined the U.S. army. He went through basic training but was discharged because of his age. He had been offered an assignment in the

Office of Strategic Services since Italian and German, along with Slovene, were his native languages, but he did not wish to become a spy. He did receive his citizenship and worked in war industry.

Victor married after Spain and had one daughter, my mother. Since he had gone to Spain under an alias, I think he successfully avoided hassling by the FBI. He did not want his family to suffer because of his political beliefs so he was not politically active after Spain. For that reason also he did not contact the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade until the early 1980s.

My grandfather was a very strong and proud man. He had a tough life and saw a lot of pain and suffering. Spain was his finest hour and I will forever be proud of him for that. ▣

— **Anthony Strukl Alpert**

\* Vittorio Vidali, a Triestan, served under the nom de guerre of Commandante Carlos. He was the political commissar of the legendary 5th Regiment commanded by Enrique Lister.



## An appeal

Yes! I believe that a contribution to the Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade has a unique quality. It brings The Volunteer to its readers, free of charge, helps meet the expenses of the office where the persisting Veteran staff carries on; and assures VALB support for causes consistent with its 60—year tradition.

Here's my contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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*Mail to: Veterans of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade, 799 Broadway, Rm. 227, New York, NY 10003*



# What they think of the book

*There is no way to understand the present or chart the course of the future without understanding the past. Some would keep the past in darkness. Others would illuminate it, putting us in touch with our past and thereby helping us design a better future. Such a light comes from the Abraham Lincoln Brigade letters. Everybody should read them.*

**Harry Belafonte**

*These letters are the real thing: heroism and idealism from the folks who volunteered to fight Hitler and Mussolini before it was popular to do so.*

**Pete Seeger**

*The Lincoln Brigade was the only American fighting force in this century made up entirely of volunteers. These letters from survivors and non-survivors reveal the fears and frustration and hardships, the surprises, the ironies and the heroics, of any military front. They range from semiliteracy to the masterly prose of a fine professional writer; what makes them special is that they are all written by men and women who had freely chosen to risk their lives in a cause they believed was worth it.*

**Ring Lardner, Jr.**

*The letters that emerged from Spain at the hands of the members of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade illuminate the human dimension of the war against fascism that began with the conflict in Spain. Their joy, pain, fear and humanity is captured in these pages, providing an invaluable insight into the well-spring of hope that sent forth these Americans — a racially integrated cross-section of our nation — to prevent the onset of a larger war that would, in time, engulf the world.*

**Ronald V. Dellums, member of Congress**

*For me, these letters constitute a remarkable and valuable historical document. They are wonderfully innocent, truthful and strangely without self-consciousness. In this time, when courage, nobility and honor have lost most of their meaning, these letters should be read and understood — explained, I mean — by as many and to as many as possible.*

**Howard Fast**

*This is a book I've been waiting for — the story of the Lincoln Brigade told through the letters of the Volunteers themselves — poignant, powerful, unforgettable.*

**Howard Zinn**

*As the son of someone who wanted to go to Spain but didn't, I think it is vital that these very moving letters be published. We usually talk about war from the standpoint of generals, but these letters, written from the field by Lincoln Brigade members, show that the words of ordinary men and women who were actually involved are much more meaningful — both emotionally and historically.*

**Stephen Jay Gould**

*The heroic valor of the Abraham Lincoln Brigade has been overshadowed in the history of the rest of World War II. This book will help to give us the remainder of the story.*

**Ruby Dee and Ossie Davis**

*Collected from some of the most literate battalions ever mustered, these are the very personal dispatches from Somebody Else's War Against Fascism that was to become everybody's. Funny, sad and moving.*

**John Sayles**

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